



Contact Information:

Erica Jaeger
(407) 245-4615
EJaeger@darden.com

Diane Lewis
(312) 729-6473
Diane.Lewis@edelman.com

Red Lobster Debuts New Ads Featuring the Brand's 'Real People'

First New Advertising Campaign in Seven Years Shares What's Different at the Iconic Casual Dining Brand

ORLANDO, Fla. (July 26, 2011) – Red Lobster announced today the launch of a new national advertising campaign featuring the real people of Red Lobster – a first for the brand and the latest step in a multi-year brand refresh designed to broaden its appeal.

Developed by Grey New York, the new ads feature actual Red Lobster employees and others associated with the brand sharing real, genuine and unscripted stories that bring to life all that's different about Red Lobster. These stories authentically articulate how the restaurant goes the extra mile to provide every guest with top-quality seafood and an experience reminiscent of dining at the seaside.

The ads also feature a powerful new tagline, "Sea Food Differently," meant to not only distinguish Red Lobster as the casual dining seafood leader, but also to communicate the many changes the brand has made in recent years. These changes include Wood-Fire Grilling by Certified Grill Masters in every restaurant, a Today's Fresh Fish Menu featuring five to eight fresh fish selections daily and a new Quick Catches Lunch Menu. Red Lobster is also remodeling its entire system of nearly 700 restaurants in a design inspired by the New England coast.

Designed to more clearly showcase the brand's dedication to freshness and quality, the new ads also mark the official unveiling of Red Lobster's new logo, featuring an updated lobster icon with the phrase "Fresh Fish, Live Lobster." The logo will be featured at the end of each new ad, as well as on new and remodeled restaurant signs, menus, gift cards and the newly redesigned Red Lobster Facebook page and website at www.redlobster.com.

"At Red Lobster, we've made some exciting changes but have yet to communicate everything that's new and different to our guests," said Salli Setta, Red Lobster's executive vice president of marketing. "Who better to tell this story than our own people, who bring to life the warmth, vitality and genuineness of our brand."

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The first 30-second ad started airing July 25 in both the U.S. and Canada in support of Red Lobster's limited-time "Crabfest" promotion. The ad features Jon Forsythe, a crab fisherman who fishes for Red Lobster in Alaska, explaining how he sources the best crab from Alaskan waters that guests can now enjoy during "Crabfest." He also showcases Red Lobster's commitment to providing guests with top-quality seafood.

The second 30-second TV spot, "Grill Master," debuted on July 25 in the U.S. and debuts on August 8 in Canada. It features one of Red Lobster's Certified Grill Masters, Charles Himple from the company's restaurant in Bronx, NY. The ad shows how Himple, like every Red Lobster Grill Master, freshly prepares shrimp, fish, steak and lobster over the open flame of the oak-wood grill, which brings out the natural flavors of seafood.

"There are a lot of amazing changes going on at Red Lobster," said Tor Myhren, Grey New York's president and chief creative officer. "We want people to see how far they've actually come. The campaign brings the new Red Lobster dining experience – all these surprising, fresh changes, from the décor to the menu to the service – to life."

The advertising campaign will also extend into the digital space, including activities to further engage guests on the brand's Facebook page, You Tube channel and website.

ABOUT RED LOBSTER

Red Lobster is the world's largest casual dining seafood restaurant with nearly 700 locations and 60,000 employees delivering delicious, high-quality seafood to guests across North America. Red Lobster is a division of Darden Restaurants, Inc. (NYSE: DRI), the world's largest full-service restaurant operating company. In 2011, Darden became the first full-service restaurant company ever to be named to the FORTUNE "100 Best Companies to Work For" list. For more information on Red Lobster or to find a remodeled location, please visit www.RedLobster.com.

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